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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MAPUTO 000986

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KCOR](#) [MZ](#) [MA](#)
SUBJECT: FRENCH ENVOY'S NEGATIVE VIEW OF MOZAMBIQUE

REF: A. MAPUTO 960
[1](#)B. MAPUTO 802

Classified By: A/DCM Matthew Roth, Reason 1.4(b+d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: In an August 18 meeting with the Charge, French Ambassador Christian Daziano, who speaks neither English nor Portuguese but appears to understand both, described his view of Mozambique after three months in country. Daziano commented pessimistically on political developments in Mozambique, including an observation that the West provides an unusually large amount of foreign aid to what he described as a relatively closed, undemocratic, and corrupt government. The French envoy and many in the donor community are particularly concerned about the increasing indifference of President Guebuza and the ruling-FRELIMO party, which he sees as a force intent on total control in Mozambique. END SUMMARY.

DISAPPOINTED IN GUEBUZA'S DOMESTIC FOCUS

[1](#)2. (C) In an aside after an August 18 discussion on Madagascar with the Charge (ref A), Daziano gave a negative impression of President Guebuza, saying he was disappointed and surprised that the President opted to continue focus on domestic issues instead of attending the Madagascar talks. According to Daziano, many that he had spoken to in the diplomatic corps thought that the Head of State should have attended the opening ceremony of Maputo I instead of campaigning for the upcoming elections (Ref B).

CRITICAL OF HANDLING OF MALAWIAN STATE VISIT

[1](#)3. (C) Daziano then criticized the handling of an August State Visit of Malawian President Bingu Wa Mutharika, which started off with a frosty reception following a scuffle at a border police station between Malawian and Mozambican security forces, creating some bilateral tensions. Daziano said Mutharika came to Mozambique to negotiate preferential usage of the Beira Corridor for Malawi, but returned home early without visiting Beira, where the negotiation was expected to take place. Daziano found Mutharika's proposal suspicious, suggesting that the Nacala Corridor would be a more obvious overland route from Malawi.

DOWN ON OPPOSITION POLITICS

[1](#)4. (C) On the opposition, Daziano said that Daviz Simango "strikes fear into the hearts of FRELIMO and RENAMO," and Simango's real challenge this year is to become leader of the

opposition, supplanting an increasingly irrelevant RENAMO leader Alfonso Dhlakama. He said that he did not think Simango's Democratic Movement of Mozambique (MDM) can win outright because "it is a party of intellectuals that appeals to educated urban dwellers." Daziano opined that the MDM message will not resonate with rural voters. Critical of FRELIMO meddling with the opposition, Daziano described intimidation tactics against Simango, mentioning that Guebuza forbade Simango from traveling around Sofala Province during the President's recent trip to the region.

CRITICAL OF FRELIMO

15. (C) The Ambassador said the Government of Mozambique (GRM) tolerates no real opposition, is largely corrupt, works to weaken civil society, stifles free media, and allows the FRELIMO party to run the state. He then questioned how a country with so far to go on basic issues of governance and democracy was the recipient of so much aid money. Daziano said there were many countries, especially in West Africa, that have achieved far greater levels of political and economic openness who do not receive such high levels of aid.

COMMENT: ENVOY NEGATIVE, BUT RAISES SERIOUS ISSUES

16. (C) The Ambassador closed with a vignette from a recent dinner he attended with FRELIMO founder Marcelino Dos Santos.

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While discussing the chronic unrest in Madagascar and the South West Indian Ocean (SWIO), Dos Santos said there are some good islands in the world, "like Cuba." Daziano said he was scandalized that the ageing but politically-powerful Dos Santos offhandedly told Daziano, "You know FRELIMO makes all the decisions," referring to FRELIMO party statutes affirming that the party has overall control of the state apparatus. While Mozambique has for years enjoyed its "donor darling" status, Daziano's comments are representative of the growing frustration expressed by the diplomatic community with the lack of transparency exhibited by the GRM, which in turn is increasingly controlled by the ruling-FRELIMO party.

TAMANI